



GALLO-ROMAN MONUMENT AT IGEL.

GALLO-ROMAN MONUMENT AT IGEL. GALLO-ROMAN WORKS GENERALLY.

There are still extant in France numerous examples of Roman buildings, differing in a measure from their prototypes, which directly testify the subjection of a large portion of that country to the Roman Empire. More especially is this observable in the departments between the Seine and the Loire, as well as the territories watered by the Aisne and Marne, where they chiefly abound. Their age extends over a period of six centuries, from the time of the invasion of Caesar to about the middle of the fifth century, soon after which period the Gallo-Romans obtained their independence, and then became subject to the more powerful Franks. By far the greater number of these monuments, however, belong to the age of the Empire's decline.

As they exhibit a modification of style to which we have now no parallel left in our own country, the specimen given above of a very elegant Gallo-Roman work, may not prove uninteresting to those who concern themselves in examining the history of architectural development. It is situated at Igel, an unimportant village in the old department of Sarre, and stands by the side of the Roman street which led from Trèves to Rheims. It has frequently excited the attention of antiquaries; but the

cause of its erection still remains unexplained. Some persons have presumed the monument was erected in memory of the marriage of Constant Chlorus with the Empress Helen, in consequence of the bas-relief found on one of the sides of the die, representing a man giving his hand to a woman, as it were in token of alliance. A mutilated inscription, with the aid of a little restoration, perhaps might sufficiently prove, that it was in fact erected by two members of the family of Secundinus, to Secundinus Securus, a rich Gallo-Roman merchant, founder of the village of Igel, in the fourth century. All, however, are agreed in supposing it a cenotaph.

The monument, built of a fine limestone, is square on plan; its height is about 66 feet, and the width of its base is 20 feet.

It is curious to notice in the above specimen the similarity that exists with the style of design prevalent during the revival of antique art in the fifteenth century. The same result has arisen in both ages, from the basis being compounded of the same ingredients; on the one hand by the evanescent yet struggling spirit of antique art, united with the excessive freedom and licence of the times, and on the other by the endeavours of those who fostered regenerative art, to free their minds from the trammels of the Gothic style, which in a measure had been the consequence of that very licence and freedom. In fact, it would require

but a trifling modification and refinement of the several parts, to produce from the above specimen a very fair example of cinque-cento design. This effect may be more or less observed in all the monuments of the low Empire, whether existing in France or elsewhere.

Among the many specimens of Gallo-Roman monuments worthy of notice, we may mention the "Porte Noire" at Besançon, the "Porte de Mars," at Rheims, that at Saintes, at Langres, at St. André (Autun), at Nîmes, the "Porte Dorée," at Frejus (Var), the elegant tomb and triumphal arches at St. Rémi and Orange, the tomb of Jovinus, at Rheims, the temple and tomb at Vaison (Vaucluse) Temple of "La Fontaine," at Nîmes, the column of Cussy, in Burgundy, the origin of which has created so much discussion and dissension; the "Maison Quarrée" and "Tour Magne," at Nîmes, the obelisk of "Estelle," the tomb of Pilate at Vienne, the theatres of Arles, Orange, and Nîmes, the palace of Gallien, at Bordeaux, the Pretorial palace at Trèves, the Palace and other antiquities at Aix, the aqueducts of "St. Just" (Rhône), Jouy (Moselle), Gargallon (Var), Pont du Gard, and lastly, the "Pile cap Mars," on the right bank of the Loire, four leagues below Tours, which, if not of Gaulish origin, as is generally supposed, is full of peculiarities, which deserve especial examination.